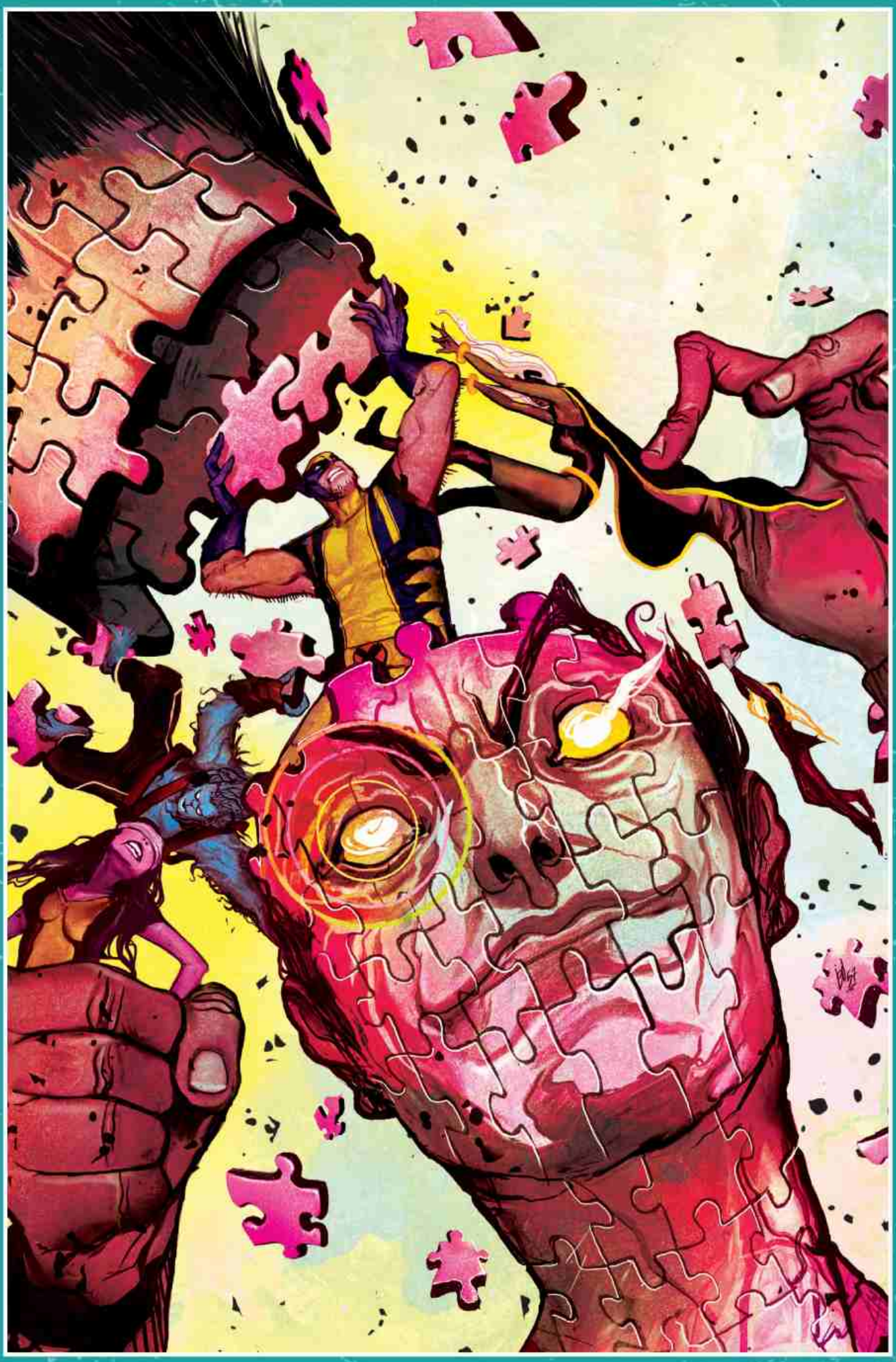
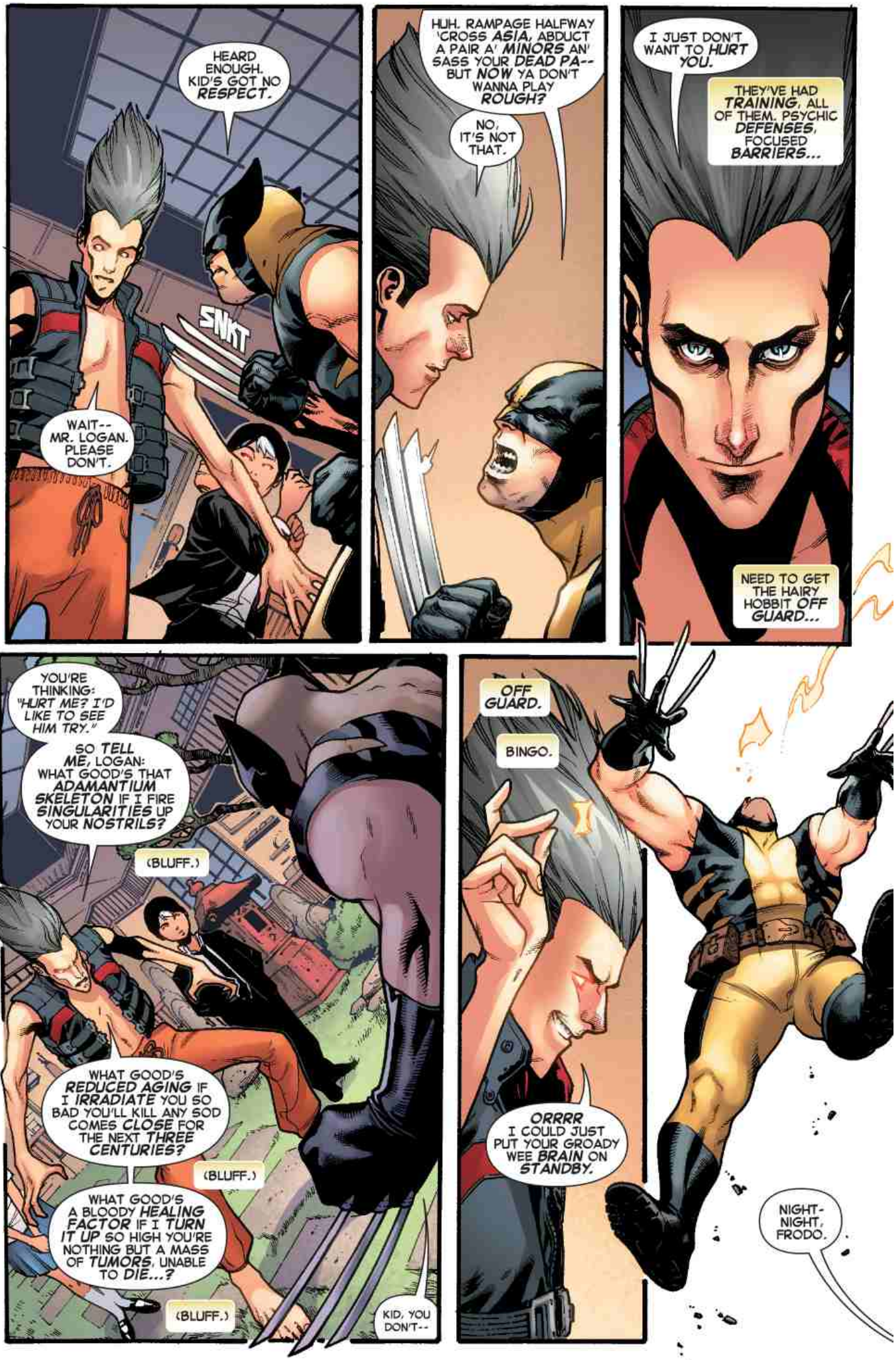


FOUR

BEHOLD! MY INEFFABLE AND OH-SO-VERY-DEAD FATHER'S DISCIPLES:
DON'T HURT THE CHILDREN, DAVID.
LET'S ALL JUST BE REASONABLE, SHALL WE?
STEP THE HELL OFF, KID.
THEY DO SO LOVE THEIR DRAMA.
THEY THINK I'M DANGEROUS-- YOU CAN'T BLAME 'EM FOR THAT. BUT THEY'VE ALSO GOT IT IN THEIR BOY SCOUT BRAINS I'M OUT TO HURT THE YOUNGSTERS I CAME TO SAVE, AND FOR THAT I SHOULD PROBABLY BE ANGRY.
BUT RIGHT NOW?
RIGHT NOW THE ONLY THING I CAN THINK IS:
HUH.
I'D FORGOTTEN HOW $@%&#% RIDICULOUS YOU PEOPLE LOOK.
SO SAID THE HUMAN NIPPLE-TASSEL.
FRENZY. HEEL.
LEGION, WE JUST WANT TO HELP.
AYE. THE X-MEN. THEY JUST WANT TO HELP.

NOT CALLIN' ME BLOODY "LEGION" WOULD BE A GOOD START.
AND IF THE LIVING TRACHEOTOMY OVER THERE KEEPS SNEAKING ROUND THE BACK, I MIGHT JUST LOSE MY #%@& AND--WHO KNOWS--FRACTURE THE UNIVERSE OR SOMETHIN'.
UH.
I'M BLUFFING, MOSTLY. CAN'T ACCESS ANY OF THE MAJOR POWERS JUST YET--MY INNER ME'S NOT STRONG ENOUGH...
...BUT THESE CLOWNS DON'T KNOW THAT.
DAVID, PLEASE--YOU'RE NOT WELL. WE CAN HELP YOU. WE CAN HELP YOUR YOUNG FRIENDS.
OH AYE? HELP THEM HOW, EXACTLY?
YOU KNOW HOW. WE GIVE THEM A FUTURE. HELP THEM CONTROL THEIR POWERS. TEACH THEM TO FIGHT FOR A BETTER TO--
THERE IT IS. "FIGHT."
THESE TWO'VE KNOWN NOTHING BUT VIOLENCE THEIR WHOLE BLOODY LIVES AND YOUSE WANT TO FIX IT AT PARAMILITARY SPANDEX SCHOOL?
SO WHADDAYA SUGGEST, BOY? KIDS SHOULD BE KIDS, BUT YOU'RE SAYIN' MUTANTS SHOULDN'T BE TAUGHT TO DEFEND 'EMSELVES?
I'M SAYING THEY SHOULDN'T HAVE TO.
AND THEY WOULDN'T, IF YOU NODDIES'D EVER MADE A JOT OF DIFFERENCE TO THE WORLD.
THAT'S...THAT'S YOUR FATHER'S DREAM YOU'RE TALKING AB--
NO, IT'S NOT. THE DREAM'S FINE.
I JUST THINK... M-MAYBE THE WAY HE WENT ABOUT IT MIGHT'VE BEEN...
(SAYIT SAYIT SAYIT)
WRONG.

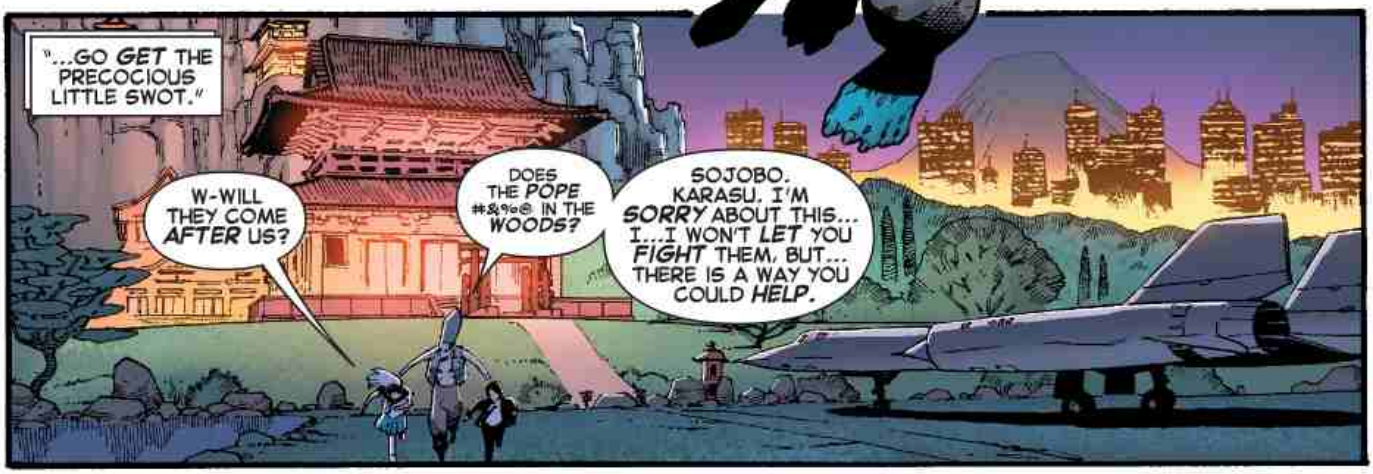

HEARD ENOUGH. KID'S GOT NO RESPECT.
SNKT
WAIT-- MR. LOGAN. PLEASE DON'T.
HUH. RAMPAGE HALFWAY 'CROSS ASIA, ABDUCT A PAIR A' MINORS AN' SASS YOUR DEAD PA-- BUT NOW YA DON'T WANNA PLAY ROUGH?
NO, IT'S NOT THAT.
I JUST DON'T WANT TO HURT YOU.
THEY'VE HAD TRAINING, ALL OF THEM. PSYCHIC DEFENSES, FOCUSED BARRIERS...
NEED TO GET THE HAIRY HOBBIT OFF GUARD...
YOU'RE THINKING: "HURT ME? I'D LIKE TO SEE HIM TRY."
SO TELL ME, LOGAN: WHAT GOOD'S THAT ADAMANTIUM SKELETON IF I FIRE SINGULARITIES UP YOUR NOSTRILS?
(BLUFF.)
WHAT GOOD'S REDUCED AGING IF I IRRADIATE YOU SO BAD YOU'LL KILL ANY SOD COMES CLOSE FOR THE NEXT THREE CENTURIES?
(BLUFF.)
WHAT GOOD'S A BLOODY HEALING FACTOR IF I TURN IT UP SO HIGH YOU'RE NOTHING BUT A MASS OF TUMORS, UNABLE TO DIE...?
(BLUFF.)
KID, YOU DON'T--
OFF GUARD.
BINGO.
ORRRR I COULD JUST PUT YOUR GROADY WEE BRAIN ON STANDBY.
NIGHT-NIGHT, FRODO.

MORAL OF THE STORY:
DON'T.
%&$#.
WITH ME.

D-DR. McCOY? SORRY. THANKYOU. ARE YOU THERE?
SORRY.

I JUST. SORRY. I THINK I COULD PROBABLY BE OF SOME USE OUT THERE, YES, NO, AND--
REQUEST DENIED, BLINDFOLD. YOU PLAYED YOUR PART TRACKING HIM.
I WON'T PROVE HIM RIGHT BY DEPLOYING A YOUNGSTER OUT HERE. STAY IN THE JET, PLEASE.

THE REST OF YOU... =NFFF=
I'D ASK THAT YOU BEAR IN MIND DAVID'S ILL--AND AS SUCH SHOULD BE ACCORDED ALL THE SYMPATHY AND CARE HIS MALADY WARRANTS.
WITH THAT CAVEAT IN PLACE...

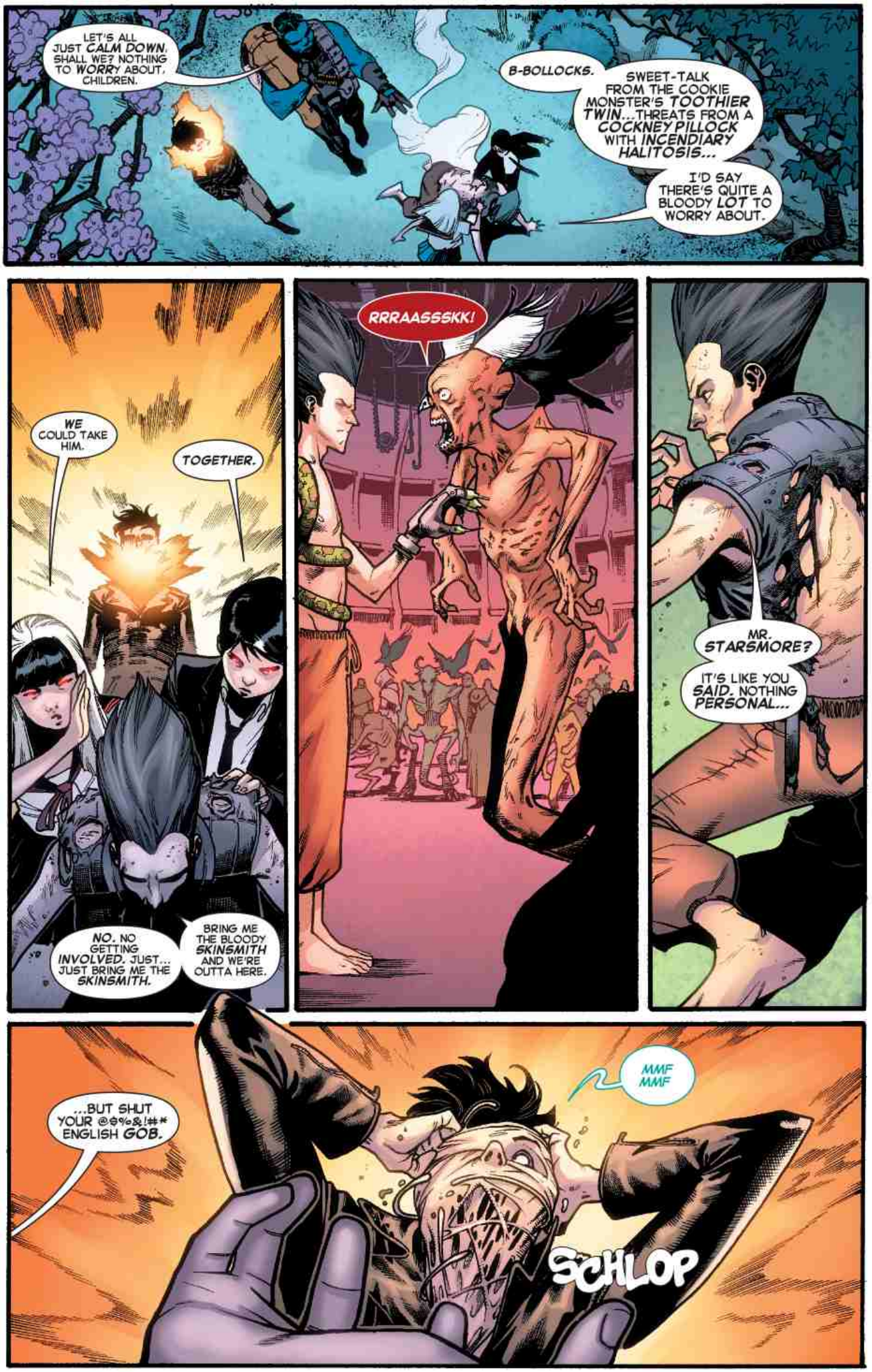

"...GO GET THE PRECOCIOUS LITTLE SWOT."
W-WILL THEY COME AFTER US?
DOES THE POPE #&%@. IN THE WOODS?
SOJOBO. KARASU. I'M SORRY ABOUT THIS... I...I WON'T LET YOU FIGHT THEM, BUT... THERE IS A WAY YOU COULD HELP.

YOU'VE SEEN WHAT IT'S LIKE UP HERE, AYE? MY BRAIN. I CAN'T ACCESS THE POWERS I'LL NEED WHILE THE OTHER PERSONALITIES ARE SO STR--
IT'S FINE. WE UNDERSTAND.
WE WANT TO HELP.
CRIKEY.
CONSIDER
IT
AAAA!
GETOFF GETOFF GETOFF!
DONE.
OW OW OW!
LEGION!
THE SKY DISLIKES YOU, CHILD.
I BELIEVE IT CHERISHES ITS MONOPOLY ON UNRESTRAINED OVERKILL.

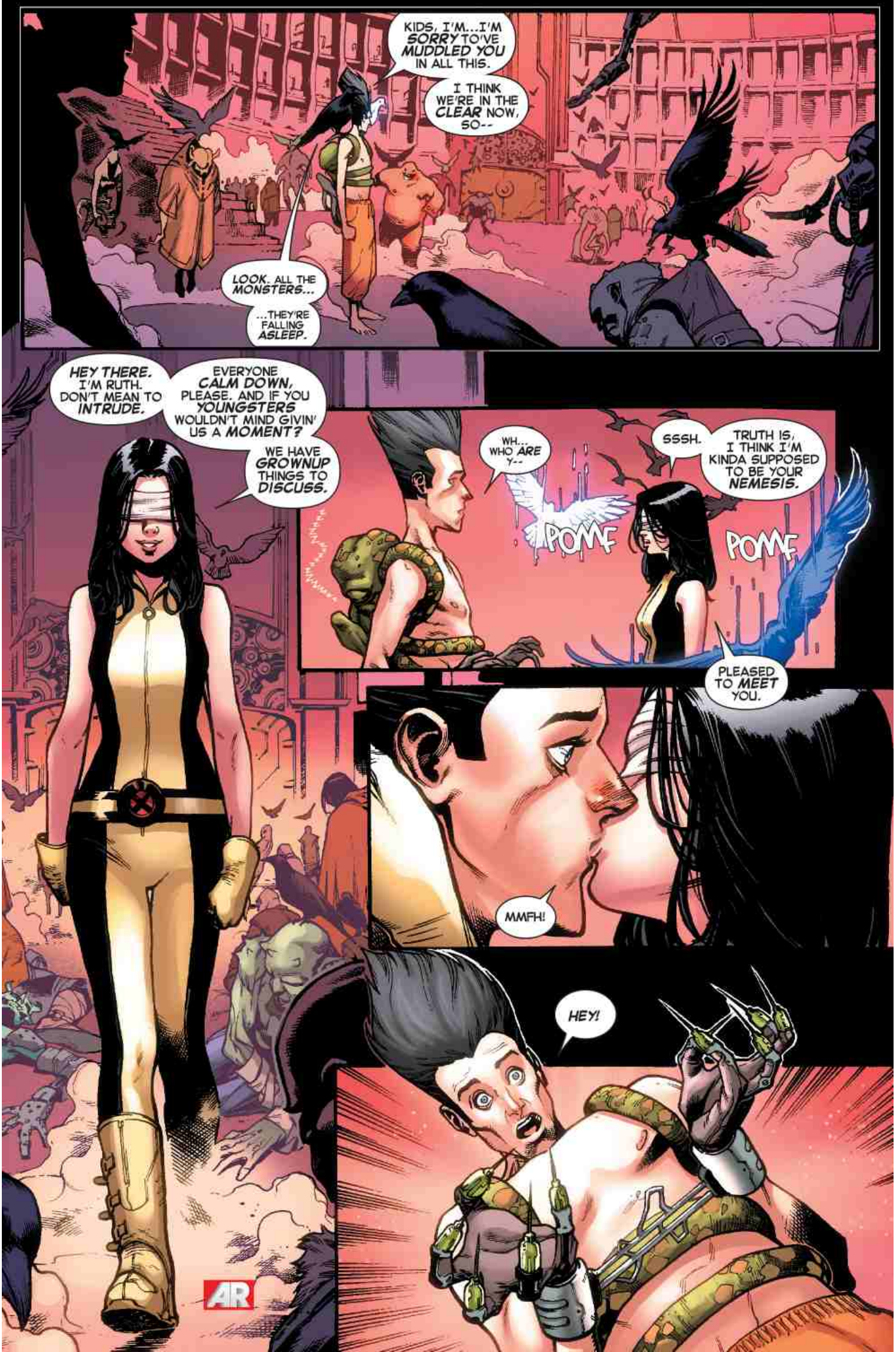
MORE BLOODY DRAMATICS.
GET TO COVER, KIDS. AND SEE IF YOU CAN'T TRACK DOWN A SCRAWNY WEE TINPOT GIT NAME OF--
--K-ZEK THE CONDUIT.
KLNK
RELEASE ME! RELEASE M--!
VZAAAAAK
GOOD SHOT, WEATHER WITCH.
THOUGH I'M AFRAID I WAS ALREADY GETTIN' WET WHEN YOU TOOK IT.
"WET"?
IF THAT'S SOME SORT OF ADOLESCENT INNUEAAAAA AADDDDDDD

W-E-T, LOVE.
WIRELESS ENERGY TRANSFER.
WELCOME TO THE FUTURE.
SMUSH
DO SOME MORE FUNNIES, SMARTASS.
I DARE YA.
...YOU'RE GOING TO HIT ME, AREN'T YOU?
A LOT?
UH-HUH.
A LOT.
MM.
KIDS: NON-NEWTONIAN ANNIE, PLEASE.
SHE'S A--
--SLIPPERY ONE!
GET AWFFA ME!

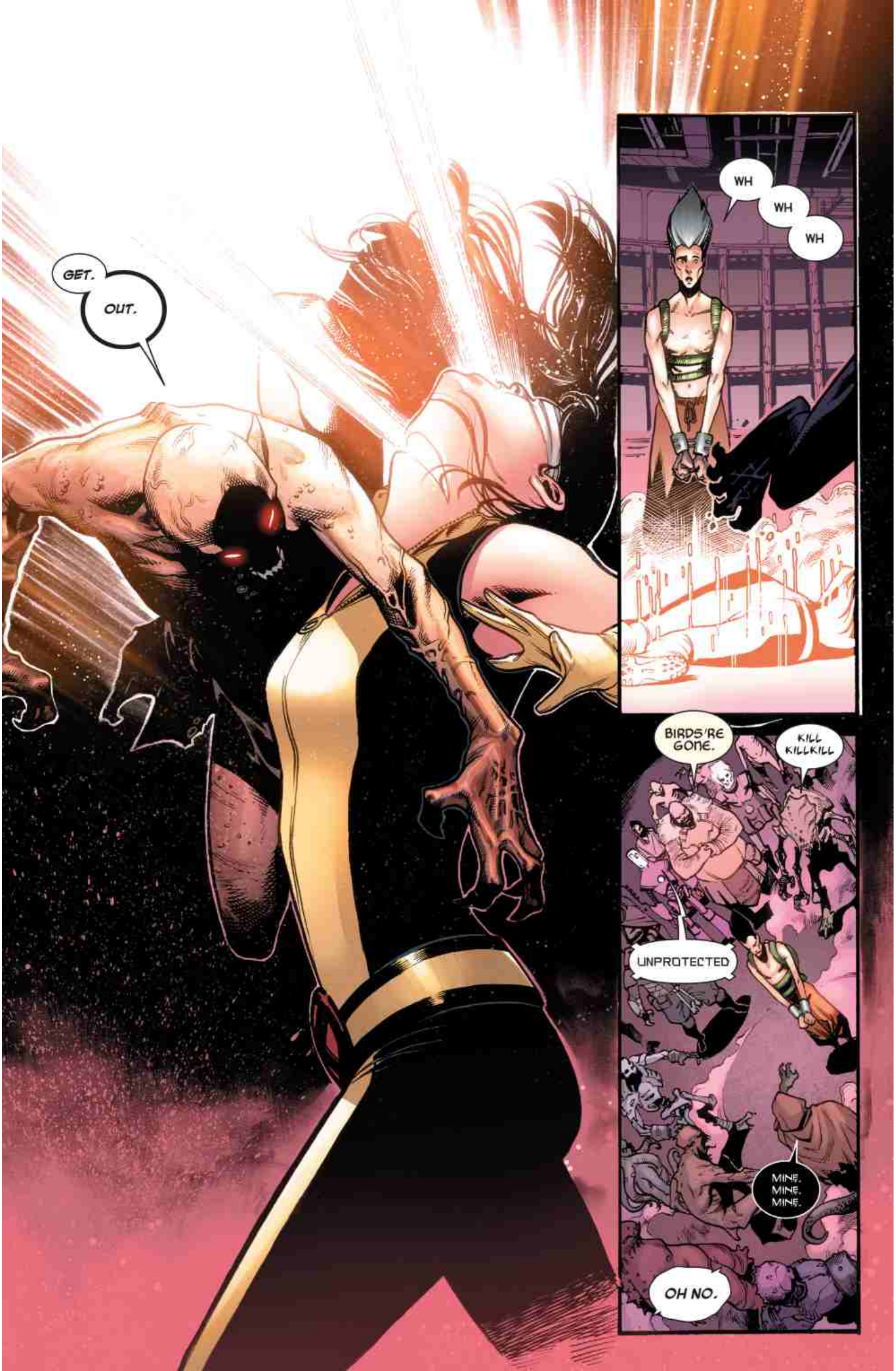
LISTEN, LADY...
I'M CLOAKED IN A ZERO-TAU NULLSKIN, IT'S ONLY FAIR I REMIND YOU OF THE LAW OF THE
C
O
NSERVATION OF ENERGY.
=SIGH= SOME PEOPLE JUST DON'T LISTEN.
VA-BOOM-AAAAAAA
AWRIGHT, SQUIRE?
AS YOU WILL'VE NOTICED, I JUST OFFICIALLY KICKED YER ARSE. NUFFIN' PERSONAL.
BUT STAY THE @#%& DOWN, YEAH? NOBODY LIKES TO SEE A BOOTPRINT ON BOTH CHEEKS.


LET'S ALL JUST CALM DOWN, SHALL WE? NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT, CHILDREN.
B-BOLLOCKS.
SWEET-TALK FROM THE COOKIE MONSTER'S TOOTHIER TWIN...THREATS FROM A COCKNEY PILLOCK WITH INCENDIARY HALITOSIS...
I'D SAY THERE'S QUITE A BLOODY LOT TO WORRY ABOUT.
WE COULD TAKE HIM.
TOGETHER.
NO. NO GETTING INVOLVED. JUST... JUST BRING ME THE SKINSMITH.
BRING ME THE BLOODY SKINSMITH AND WE'RE OUTTA HERE.
RRRAASSSKK!
MR. STARSMORE?
IT'S LIKE YOU SAID. NOTHING PERSONAL...
...BUT SHUT YOUR @$%&!#* ENGLISH GOB.
MMF MMF
SCHLOP

KIDS. RUN.
HANK? PEN'S MIGHTIER'N THE SWORD. REMEMBER THAT.
SPARE ME THE PRETENTIOUS APHORISMS, DAVID! WE DIDN'T WANT VIOLENCE ANY MORE THAN Y--
C-CAN'T VENT!
CAN'T VENT!
GONNA BLOW.
OH, NO.
PRESSURE.
OH, NO, NO, NO.
I-INSIDE MY SKULL. IN MY BOWEL.
THIS ISN'T LIKE HIM... DAVID'S NOT A KILLER... WH--
RUN, HANK! GO GET THE DISRESPECTFUL LITTLE SH--
DISRESPECTFUL.
THAT'S IT!
FWWOOMF
MIGHTIER THAN THE SWORD, DAVID.
CLEVER LITTLE DEVIL.
BACK IN THE HOUSE--HE INSULTED YOU! "TRACHEOTOMY KID"!
THERE--SEE? THE SKIN JUST PEELS OFF YOUR FACE...I DON'T BELIEVE HE MEANT ANY LASTING H--
UH.
HANK... D-DIDN'T YOU TELL THE PIÑATA PRINCESS TO WAIT IN THE BLEEDIN' JET?
HE DID, SIR. YES. PARDON. BUT YOU REALLY NEEDN'T WORRY.
DAVID WON'T HURT ME.
SORRY. THANK YOU.
NOT EVER.


KIDS, I'M...I'M SORRY TO'VE MUDDLED YOU IN ALL THIS.
I THINK WE'RE IN THE CLEAR NOW, SO--
LOOK. ALL THE MONSTERS...
...THEY'RE FALLING ASLEEP.
HEY THERE. I'M RUTH. DON'T MEAN TO INTRUDE.
EVERYONE CALM DOWN, PLEASE. AND IF YOU YOUNGSTERS WOULDN'T MIND GIVIN' US A MOMENT?
WE HAVE GROWNUP THINGS TO DISCUSS.
WH... WHO ARE Y--
POMF
SSSH.
TRUTH IS, I THINK I'M KINDA SUPPOSED TO BE YOUR NEMESIS.
POMF
PLEASED TO MEET YOU.
MMFH!
HEY!

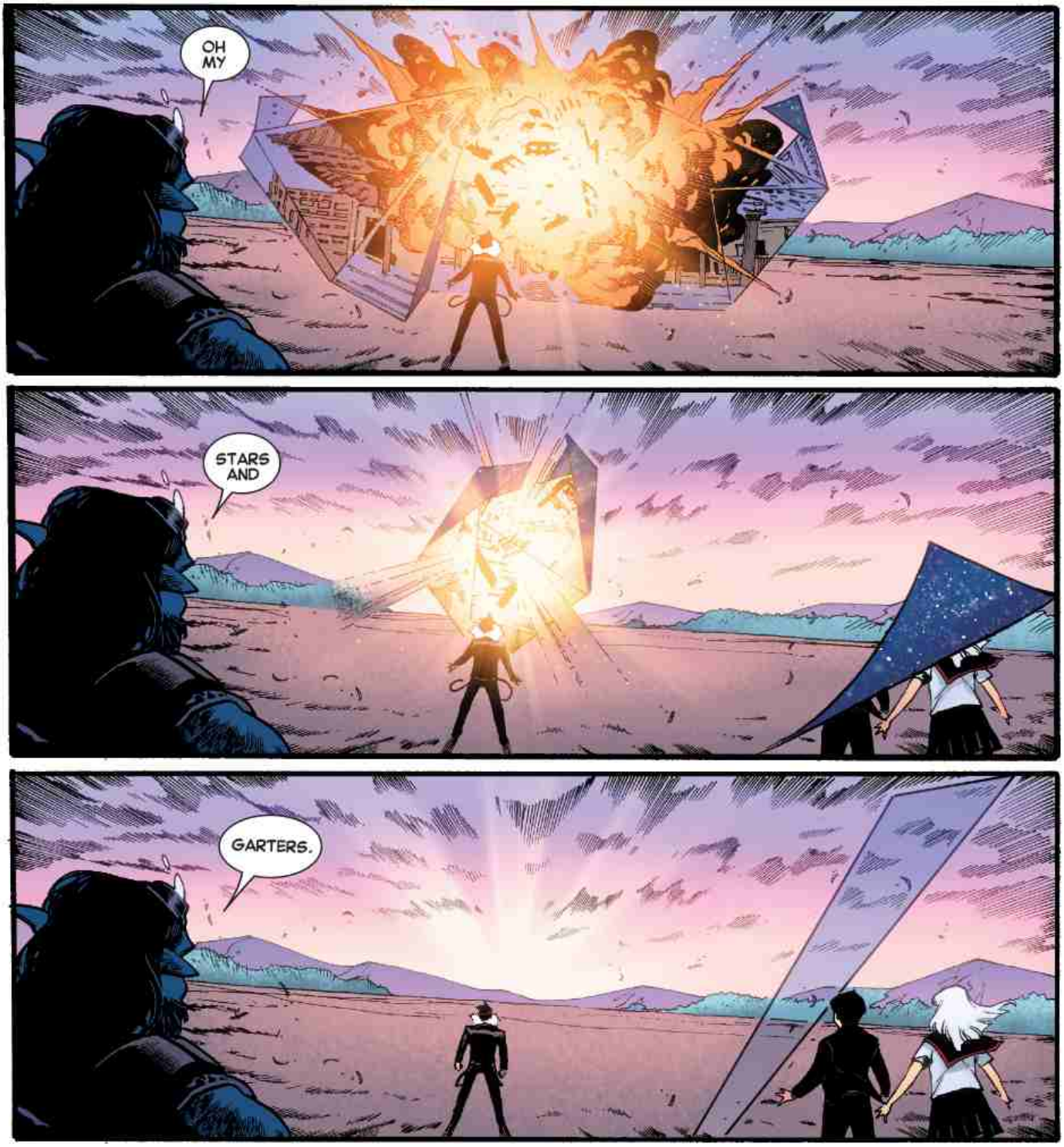
SHE KICKED US OUT!
OH CRAP...
I'VE NO POWERS.
WE CAN SEE THEM. THE SILLY-COSTUME PEOPLE. THEY'RE MOVING.
THEY'RE GOING TO INTERCEPT US. WHAT SHOULD WE DO...?
STRANGE...
...FOR SOME REASON MY BRAIN GOES BACK TO TIBET. THE EYEBALL-FREAK WHOSE MIND LED ME TO THE TWINS IN THE FIRST PLACE...
THOUGHT YOU WAS S'POSED TO BE DANGEROUS ANYHOW? NOT SOME STAMMERIN' LITTLE PUNK WITH %@#*& HAIR AN' A HAGGIS-HUMPER ACCENT.
I GUESS MAYBE HE WAS RIGHT.
...
...
...
HIDE?
PLEASE. PLEASE LET ME GO.
THE CHILDREN'RE FRIGHTENED. I NEED TO SAVE TH--
ZZZZZZZ
THERE'S ONLY ONE SCARED KID YOU NEED TO SAVE, DAVID, AND HE'S LOOKING RIGHT AT ME.
EVERYTHING'S GONNA BE ALL RIGHT. Y'HEAR?
YOU JUST GOTTA TRUST M--


GET.
OUT.
WH
WH
WH
BIRDS'RE GONE.
KILL KILLKILL
UNPROTECTED
MINE. MINE. MINE.
OH NO.

H-HERE. IN HERE. QUIET AS MICE, OKAY?
I...I NEED TO CLEAR MY HEAD.
ARE YOU SURE YOU WANT TO HIDE
IN THE AMMO STOCKROOM?
OH CRAP.
RUTH? RUTH!
SHE'S BARELY BREATHING!
BUGGER THIS FOR A GAME OF SOLDIERS.
CHAMBER, DON'T DO ANYTHING ST--
NAH. NAH.
SORRY, MATE. LITTLE PUNK WENT THROUGH US LIKE BUTTER...
...NO MORE KID GLOVES.
STOP, JONO, WAIT--

SOMETHING RUSTLING? IS...IS SOMEONE IN HERE?
FIRE.
FIRE'S COMING--
NO, NO, NO, NO, NO
BWOOOOMF
JONO, NO--!
DAVID. P-PLEASE.
WE DON'T WANT TO DIE.
AND THERE IT IS.
SNAP
IN THE END, IT'S THAT SIMPLE:
THEY NEED ME. SOMEONE FINALLY BLOODY NEEDS ME.

HELL OF AN EGO BOOST.
ORIGAMIST!
YOU'RE MINE!
THE ORIGAMIST. YOU REMEMBER HIM, AYE? ONE OF THE TOP DOGS.
A REALITY CHANGER.
A SPACE FOLDER.
WHUMP


OH MY
STARS AND
GARTERS.

HE FOLDED THE FIRE AWAY.
HE'S GONE NOW.

HE SAVED US.
HANK, MATE, I'M SORRY. I 'AD NO IDEA THERE WAS AMMO IN TH--
HOW DID HE PUT IT?
"SHUT YOUR ENGLISH GOB," YES?
KIDS? EVERYTHING'S GOING TO BE OKAY NOW.
YOU CAN COME WITH US IF YOU WANT. WE'D LIKE YOU TO.
WE PROMISE TO KEEP YOU SAFE.
WE DON'T WANT TO. DO WE, SOJOBO?
DAVID SAID YOU'D MAKE US FIGHT AND--
I THINK WE SHOULD GO WITH THEM, KARASU.
BUT... BUT, SOJOBO, YOU SAID--
IT IS FOR THE BEST, CHILD.
PLEASE, TRUST US?

THE BLOODY X-MEN, THERE. DAD'S TECHNICOLOR MUTANT MILITIA.
WHAT WAS IT THE EYEBALL GUY CALLED THEM, UP IN THE MOUNTAINS?
OH AYE: "IDEALISTIC MORONS PRATTLIN' 'BOUT EQUALITY AN' TOLERANCE WHILE DOING PRECISELY JACK-#@%& TO ACHIEVE IT."
"CRUDE. INELEGANT. STOOPID."
THERE'S A FIRE-SCORCHED, BULLET-RIDDLED, HEAVILY FOLDED DIMENSION SOMEWHERE TO THE LEFT OF LIMBO TO MARK HIS WORDS.
THAT'S THE SECOND TIME HE'S BEEN RIGHT, THE BASTARD. I WONDER WHO HE WAS.
I WONDER WHAT REASON HE'S GOT FOR DISLIKING THE KIDDIE-THIEVIN' LYCRANAUTS--
--AS MUCH AS I'M STARTING TO.
HUH?

...SAYIN', KITTY, IS I GOT A HEAD LIKE A SAVAGE LAND STAMPEDE AN' THERE BETTER BE BEER IN THE STAFF ROOM OR...
...EVER SEE THAT LITTLE WEASEL AGAIN I'M 'A SMEAR HIM ACROSS THE ATMOSPHERE AND...
...NO REACTION TO ANY STIMULUS, EEG'S BARELY TWITCHING... FRANKLY I'M OUT OF MY...
...YOU TO PREP A BED, DOCTOR RAO--WE HAVE A PSYCHIC TRAUMA PATIENT INBOUND AND...
...SORRY... SORRY... SORRY...
I DON'T LIKE THESE PEOPLE, SOJOBO. THEY'RE STRANGE.
W-WE SHOULDN'T HAVE COME.
DON'T BE SUCH A COWARD.
THIS IS EXACTLY WHERE WE'RE MEANT TO BE.